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THE URBAN DISTRICT
OF SKELMERSDALE

ANNUAL REPORT

of the
Medical Officer
of Health

for the year
1966



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SKELMERSDALE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

1966

Vice-Chairman J. W. SHUFFLEBOTHAM

Chairman of the Health Committee: T. MIDDLEHURST

Mrs. G. BIRCHALL
J. CADWELL
A. DAVIES
H. EDDEN
Mr. J. GREEN
Mrs. J. GREEN

J. T. LATHAM
A. R. LYON
J. LOWE
T. MOSTON
R. H. PHEASANT
W. T. WESTERGREN

Medical Officer of Health:

J. GORDON HAILWOOD, M.D., CH.B., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.
(part-time)

(Divisional Medical Officer, Lancashire County Council)

Deputy Medical Officer of Health:

T. M. C. LINDSAY, M.B., B.S., D.P.H, (part-time)

(Assistant Divisional Medical Officer, Lancashire County Council)

Public Health Inspector:

ALBERT LAVELLE, M.A.P.H.I., A.R.S.H., CERT.I.H.S.G.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
HEALTH COMMITTEE

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report on the health of Skelmersdale during 1966.

The health of the district remained good throughout the year and there were only six cases of infectious disease notified.

The Birth Rate was 21.6 per 1,000 population, compared with 18.2 last year. The General Death Rate at 12.3 per 1,000 population showed a decrease on the figure of 15.0 for 1965. The Infantile Mortality Rate was 10.9 per 1,000 live births, showing a welcome reduction on the figure of 18 for 1965. There were again no maternal deaths during the year.

Housing conditions have continued to improve and further progress was made with slum clearance. 561 new houses were completed during the year, of which 98 were built by the Local Authority. 45 houses were demolished as unfit for human habitation under the Housing Act, while a further 219 houses were found to be unfit but capable of being rendered fit.

The Public Health Inspector maintained his high standard of work and the adoption by the Council of a smoke control programme has considerably increased this work. He made 1,405 visits to inspect houses under the Public Health and Housing Acts, and 306 other visits. As a result 260 notices were served to abate nuisances and 226 were complied with.

Finally, I would thank the Chairman and Members of the Health Committee for their interest and support during the year and the members of the staff for their ready help and co-operation at all times.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

J. G. HAILWOOD

Medical Officer of Health

July, 1967

Area of the District: 1,942 acres.

Resident Population (Registrar General's estimate at mid-1966):
7,740.

Number of inhabited houses according to Rate Book at end of 1966:
3,042.

Rateable Value: £260,225.

Sum represented by a penny rate: £896.

—o—

SUMMARY OF VITAL STATISTICS FOR 1966

	Male	Female	Total
LIVE BIRTHS	89	95	184
Live births rate per 1,000 population	—	—	21.6
Illegitimate live births per cent of total live births	—	—	3.8
STILL BIRTHS	—	2	2
Still birth rate per 1,000 live and still births	—	—	10.8
TOTAL LIVE AND STILL BIRTHS	89	97	186
DEATHS	43	37	80
Death rate per 1,000 population	—	—	12.3
INFANT DEATHS	2	—	2
Infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births	—	—	10.9
Infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births legitimate	—	—	11.2
Infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births illegitimate	—	—	—
Neo-natal mortality rate per 1,000 live births (first four weeks)	—	—	10.9
Early neo-natal mortality rate per 1,000 live births (first week)	—	—	5.4
Perinatal mortality rate per 1,000 live and still births (still births and deaths under 1 week combined)	—	—	16.1
Maternal deaths (including abortion)	—	—	—
Maternal mortality rate per 1,000 live and still births	—	—	—

NOTES ON VITAL STATISTICS

Births

There were 184 births registered in the Urban District during the year, of which 89 were male and 95 female and including 7 illegitimate births, of which 2 were male and 5 female. The adjusted birth rate per 1,000 per population (mid-1966) (comparability factor 0.91) was 21.6 compared with 18.2 in 1965.

Deaths

The total number of deaths registered in the Urban District during the year was 80, of this number 43 were male and 37 female. There was no change on the figure for 1965. The crude death rate for the year was 10.3 per 1,000 population. The adjusted death rate (comparability factor 1.19) was 12.3 per 1,000 population, compared with 15.0 in 1965.

Infant Mortality

There were no deaths during the year due to Zymotic or Epidemic diseases. There were 2 deaths of infants under 1 year, an infantile mortality rate of 10.9 per 1,000 live births.

Maternal Mortality

No maternal deaths occurred in the district during the year. The maternal mortality rate for England and Wales was 0.26.

CAUSES OF DEATH IN THE
SKELMERSDALE URBAN DISTRICT, 1966

—o—

	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
Tuberculosis of the respiratory system	—	—
Other forms of Tuberculosis	—	—
Syphilitic Diseases	—	—
Diphtheria	—	—
Whooping Cough	—	—
Meningococcal Infections	—	—
Acute Poliomyelitis	—	—
Measles	—	—
Other infective and parasitic diseases	—	—
Cancer	11	4
Leukaemia, Aleukaemia	—	—
Diabetes	—	—
Vascular lesions of nervous systems	7	6
Heart diseases	10	12
Other circulatory diseases	1	4
Influenza	3	1
Pneumonia	—	2
Bronchitis	2	1
Other diseases of respiratory system	2	—
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	—	—
Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	—	—
Nephritis and nephrosis	1	—
Hyperplasia of prostate	—	—
Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	—	—
Congenital malformations	2	—
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	4	5
Motor vehicle accidents	—	—
All other accidents	—	2
Suicide	—	—
Homicide and operations of war	—	—
	43	37

GENERAL PROVISIONS OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA

Laboratory Facilities

Pathological specimens of a simple nature, throat swabs, etc., are sent for examination to the E.M.S. Pathological Laboratory at Ormskirk and District General Hospital. All other specimens are sent to the City Laboratories, Liverpool.

Ambulance Facilities

Ambulance Services are provided by the County Council under the National Health Service Act, 1946.

Clinics and Treatment Centres

A Congregational Schoolroom in Witham Road is utilised every Wednesday morning as a Clinic Welfare Centre and Minor Ailments Clinic, under the direction of Dr. T. M. C. Lindsay and Mrs. Nicholson and Miss Peate of the Lancashire County Council. An Immunisation Clinic is held on the fourth Wednesday afternoon in each month at 1-45 p.m. on the same premises by Dr. Lindsay. A chiropody clinic is held each Friday and is a free service for old aged pensioners.

A new clinic has been opened at 50/52 Tarlswood where a child welfare clinic is held each Thursday from 2 to 4 p.m. under the direction of Dr. J. M. Allan, General Practitioner, with Mrs. Nicholson and Miss Peate, Lancashire County Council, in attendance.

Hospitals

There are no hospitals in the town.

The Ormskirk and District General Hospital and the Wigan Hospitals provide ample accommodation for all patients from Skelmersdale.

Infectious cases are admitted to the New Hall Isolation Hospital, Scarisbrick.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

Water Supply

The township is supplied with water by the West Lancashire Water Board.

Water is pumped from two boreholes some 750 feet deep at Scarth Hill into the adjoining water tower from which it gravitates through a 7in. main to the district. This pumping station formerly belonged to the Council who sold it to the Southport and District Water Board in 1907. The West Lancashire Water Board have become responsible for both supply and distribution. Many lengths of old mains have been renewed. The water supply is of the highest standard of organic bacterial purity.

Due to the Council's post war building programme and modernisation of existing old houses, the pressure in the highest parts of the town is poor at certain periods of the week, but the position has improved since the installation of a booster pump on the 7in. supply main.

Sewage Disposal

The district is sewered on the partly separate system. The sewage from approximately 2,000 houses is discharged by gravity through a 24in. outfall sewer at the Council's Berry Street Disposal Works, and from approximately 350 houses by a 15in. outfall sewer at the Pennylands Works.

Sewage from a small number of houses in the Stormy Area is discharged into settling tanks at the rear of Summer Street.

The sewage at Berry Street is treated by settlement and land irrigation and is in urgent need of modernisation.

The sewage at Pennylands is treated by sedimentation and filtration and considerable improvement has been made in the quality of the effluent.

Additional temporary sewage disposal plants have been provided to serve the first phase of the New Town comprising 600 houses and also to serve the Gillibrands Industrial Estate.

It is anticipated that the new sewage works to serve the whole area will be ready during 1967.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION

Privy Middens: Nil.

Number of Pail Closets: 39. Number converted to W.C.'s.: Nil

Number of dry ashpits (excluding middens): Nil.

Number of moveable ashbins: 2,997.

Number of Houses on water carriage system: 3,003.

Number of water closets (including schools, etc.): 3,095.

HOUSING

Number of new houses erected during the year:

(i) By the Local Authority	98
(ii) By other Local Authorities	Nil
(iii) By other bodies or persons	463
<i>1 Inspection of dwelling houses during the year:</i>	
(1) (a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected formally or informally for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	451
(b) Number of inspections formal or informal made for the purpose	1405

(2)	Dwelling houses unfit for human habitation and not capable at reasonable expense of being rendered fit:	
(a)	Number found during the year	41
(b)	Number (or estimated number) at end of year	100
(3)	Number of dwelling houses found during year to be not in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation but capable of being rendered fit	407

2 *Clearance Areas (Housing Act, 1957):*

(1)	Number of dwellings demolished during year:	
(a)	Unfit houses	34
(b)	Other houses	7
(2)	Number of persons displaced	144
(3)	Number of families displaced	51

3 *Houses not included in Clearance Areas:*

(1) *Houses demolished or closed during year.*

Housing Act, 1957:—

- (i) Demolished as a result of formal or informal procedure (Section 11) ...
- (ii) Closed in pursuance of an undertaking given by owners under Section 11 and still in force
- (iii) Parts of building closed (Section 12)

		No. of
		Persons
Houses	Displaced	
	4	5
	2	Nil
	Nil	Nil

(2) *Repairs during the year:*

(a)	Unfit houses rendered fit and houses in which defects were remedied during the period as a result of informal action by Local Authority under the Housing or Public Health Acts	219
(b)	Public Health Acts — action after service of informal notice houses in which defects were remedied	Nil
(i)	By Owners	Nil
(ii)	By Local Authority in default of owners	Nil

(c) Housing Act, 1936, action after service of informal notice (sections 9, 10, 11 and 16) Houses made fit:		
(i) By Owners ...	Nil	
(ii) By Local Authority in default of owners ...	Nil	
(d) Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954:		
Houses re-constructed, enlarged or improved and Demolition Orders revoked (Section 5) ...	Nil	
4 <i>Unfit houses in temporary use (Housing Act, 1957):</i>		
(1) Number of houses at end of year retained for temporary accommodation and approval for grant under section 7 ...	Nil	
(2) Number of separate dwellings contained in (1) above	Nil	
(3) Number of Houses at end of year licensed for temporary occupation (Section 6) ...	Nil	
5 <i>House purchase and Housing Act, 1959 - Improvement Grants, etc.</i>		
Action during year - Applications approved ...	2	

INFECTIOUS DISEASE STATISTICS

	Smallpox	Enteric Fever	Scarlet Fever	Measles	Diphtheria	Puerperal Pyrexia	Erysipelas	Whooping Cough	Pneumonia	Para-Typhoid Fever	Ophthalmia Neonatorum	Acute Poliomyelitis	Dysentery
Cases . . .	—	—	1	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Deaths . . .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION

The number of children who have completed a full course of Immunisation during the year ended 31st December, 1966, is as follows:

Children between the ages 0-4 years, 140, and children between the ages 5-15 years, 7, making a total of 147.

SCARLET FEVER

*Table showing incidence and mortality from Scarlet Fever
1957-1966*

	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966
Cases	—	2	1	1	1	—	—	—	4	1
Deaths	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

TUBERCULOSIS

New Cases and Mortality during 1966

Age Periods	New Cases				Deaths			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1—5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
6—10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
11—15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
16—20	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
21—25	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
26—35	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
36—45	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
46—55	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
56—65	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Over 65	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTALS	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
	2		—		—		—	

Dispensary and sanatorium treatment for Tuberculosis is administered by the appropriate department of the Lancashire County Council.

The following table shows the number, monthly distribution and nature of cases of Infectious Diseases coming under the notice of the Medical Officer of Health during 1966

REMOVED TO HOSPITAL											
TOTALS											
DECEMBER											
NOVEMBER											
OCTOBER											
SEPTEMBER											
AUGUST											
JULY											
JUNE											
MAY											
APRIL											
MARCH											
FEBRUARY											
JANUARY											
ANTHRAX	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
SMALLPOX	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
SCARLET FEVER	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	
DIPHTHERIA	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
ENTERIC FEVER	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
PARA-TYPHOID FEVER	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
ACUTE PNEUMONIA	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
PUERPERAL PYREXIA	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
MENINGOCOCCAL INFECTION	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
MALARIA	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
DYSENTERY	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
MEASLES	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	
WHOOPING COUGH	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	
ERYSIPelas	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
OPHTHALMIA NEONATORUM	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
ACUTE POLIOMYELITIS	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
TOTALS	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	
										2	
										3	
										6	

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR 1966

Notifiable Diseases	HOSPITAL	TOTAL CASES NOTIFIED											Deaths in Hospital	
		Total Cases at all ages	Under 1 Year	1 Year	2	3	4	5-10	11-15	16-20	21-35	36-45	46-65	
S <small>MA</small> L <small>LPO</small> X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
S <small>CAR</small> LET F <small>EVER</small>	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
D <small>IPH</small> ITHERIA	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
E <small>NTER</small> IC F <small>EVER</small>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
P <small>ARA</small> -T <small>YPO</small> HOID	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
F <small>EVER</small>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
P <small>UER</small> P <small>ER</small> AL	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
P <small>YR</small> E <small>XIA</small>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
E <small>RY</small> S <small>IP</small> E <small>LAS</small>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
P <small>OLIOMY</small> E <small>LITIS</small>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
A <small>CUTE</small>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
P <small>NEUM</small> ONIA	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
M <small>ENINGOCOCCAL</small>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
I <small>NFECT</small> ION	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
M <small>EASLES</small>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
W <small>HOO</small> P <small>ING</small> C <small>OUGH</small>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
F <small>OOD</small> P <small>OISON</small> ING	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
D <small>YS</small> E <small>NT</small> ERY	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
A <small>NT</small> H <small>RAX</small>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
O <small>PH</small> T <small>HALM</small> IA	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
N <small>EON</small> A <small>TOR</small> UM	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
P <small>ULM</small> ONARY	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
T <small>UBERC</small> ULOSIS	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
N <small>ON</small> -P <small>ULM</small> ONARY	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
T <small>UBERC</small> ULOSIS	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTALS	...	...	...	...	...	8	—	1	1	1	—	3	—	1
												2	—	1
												3	—	1

Factories Acts, 1937 to 1959

1. INSPECTIONS

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notice	Occupiers Prosecuted
(1) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authority	44	46	—	—
(2) Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority	1	1	1	—
(3) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority	—	—	—	—
Total	45	47	1	—

2. DEFECTS FOUND

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which Prosecutions were instituted	
	Found	Remedied	Referred			
			To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector		
Want of Cleanliness (Sect. 1)	—	—	—	—	—	
Overcrowding (Sect. 2) .	—	—	—	—	—	
Inadequate ventilation (Sect. 4)	—	—	—	—	—	
Ineffective drainage of floor (Sect. 6)	—	—	—	—	—	
Sanitary conveniences (Sect. 7)						
(a) Insufficient	—	—	—	—	—	
(b) Unsuitable or defective	1	1	—	—	—	
(c) Not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—	—	
Other offences against the Act	—	—	—	—	—	
Total	1	1	—	—	—	

PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR'S REPORT FOR 1966

The Council have been anxious to increase the number of improvement grants made in Skelmersdale.

Now that the uncertainty as to the future life of all the houses situated West of the Railway Line has been removed, the Council decided to publicise the improvement grant scheme widely in that area and a survey was made during the year revealing that out of a total of 286 in the area, 112 houses had no bathroom.

The Council urged the owners of the 112 houses to take advantage of the improvement grant scheme.

The Council also sponsored the Civic Trust scheme for the improvement of the houses in the "Action Area" and similarly hoped for an equal response from property owners in the area.

HOUSING

(a) *Improvements*

2 Applications for standard improvement grants were approved during the year.

(b) *Repairs*

Extensive repairs have been carried out to rented properties throughout the area as a result of both formal and statutory notices.

(c) *Slum Clearance*

45 houses were demolished during the year: 41 under Compulsory Purchase Orders, 34 of which were in Clearance Areas, and 4 under demolition orders. The Summer Street, Berry Street/Whalley Street, High Street and Conway Street Compulsory Purchase Orders were submitted to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government for confirmation during the year.

FOOD

(a) *Premises*

Occupiers are maintaining their premises in a satisfactory condition.

(b) *Unsound Food*

The following articles, unfit for human consumption, have been surrendered by retailers:

	<i>Food</i>	<i>Weight</i>
Tinned	Ham	54 lbs.
,, 	Beef	6 lbs.
,, 	Turkey	7 lbs.

(c) *Adulteration of Food*

The following report has been submitted by the Lancashire County Council whose sampling officer took the following samples in Skelmersdale for analysis by the Public Analyst:
A total of 38 samples was obtained comprising 13 milk (of which two were Channel Islands milk) and 25 others as follows:

2 Castor Oil B.P.	1 Chocolate Wafer Bar
2 Throat Lozenges	1 Arrowroot
2 Hypon Tablets	2 Coffee extract, dry
2 Lobak Tablets	4 Baking powder
2 Vitamin C Tablets	2 Barley
1 Invalid Toffee	1 Beef Sausage
2 Sweets	1 Pork Sausage

HAWKERS OF FOOD

The inspection of hawker's vehicles has continued in an endeavour to maintain a good standard with which any new hawkers will be expected to comply prior to their registration.

ICE CREAM

There are 29 registered premises for the storage and sale of ice cream.

All retailers maintained their premises in a satisfactory condition during the year and each have satisfactory washing facilities including a constant supply of hot water.

Six ice cream samples were submitted for bacteriological examination and all were reported satisfactory.

RODENT CONTROL

Routine inspections for the destruction of rats and mice were carried out by the Rodent Operator. Private premises were treated free of cost and a charge made for the business premises. No major infestations were discovered. Maintenance treatments for the destruction of rats in sewers were carried out and there was no evidence of serious infestation.

Attention was also paid to the Council's Sewage Works and Refuse Tip.

REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL

This service is carried out under the supervision of the Public Health Inspector.

The Gibson Pendulum 27 cubic yard compression freighter is of sufficient capacity to require only two trips per day to the tip and has offset the disadvantage of having to travel three miles to the new tip outside the Council's area.

The paper sack system of refuse collection has been introduced and has been received favourably by the first residents of the new town. A small manual trailer was designed for use with 2 collectors specifically for collection of paper sacks on the New Town Site, owing to the inaccessibility of the pedestrian precincts and is proving satisfactory. Paper sacks are brought in loads of approximately 20 to a point to which the Council's refuse freighter can gain access. The service is approximately twice as fast as the normal bin collection.

SHOPS ACT, 1930

There are 80 shops on the register and 157 visits were made during the year.

Duties under the Shops Act, 1950, relating to the employment of young persons and welfare facilities were carried out on behalf of the County Council.

OFFICES AND SHOPS ACT, 1963

New registration covering working conditions in offices and shops has involved additional work in the department. Certain important safety conditions for personnel have been introduced..

SCHOOLS

The school kitchens, dinner service rooms and sanitary accommodation at each of the five schools have been inspected.

The facilities at the County Secondary School are excellent and have been considerably improved at the other schools.

Defects found have been reported to the Education Authority and have been rectified.

All schools have now been provided with constant supply of hot water to the wash-hand basins.

FACTORIES

Routine visits have been made to the factories in the district and any defects found have been remedied.

ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION

The Council have made their No. 2 Smoke Control Area and submitted it for confirmation by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government.

A number of visits have been made to the four factories with boiler houses in the district. Smoke emission has been reduced to the permissible minimum.

The erection of the new factories on the Gillibrands site has involved the fixing of chimney heights by the Urban District Council to ensure that the ground level concentration of sulphur dioxide gas in the vicinity is kept to a level well below that considered injurious to health.

SUMMARY OF THE WORK OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

Number of dwelling houses inspected under the Public Health and Housing Acts ...	451
Number of inspections made for the above purpose ...	1405
Visits to factories and work places ...	46
Visits to food premises ...	19
Visits re infectious diseases ...	2
Visits to schools ...	5
Visits to licensed premises ...	15
Visits to shops ...	157
Visits to hawkers vehicles ...	25
Visits re rodent control ...	36
Number of informal notices served ...	260
Number of informal notices complied with ...	226
Number of Statutory notices served ...	4
Number of Statutory notices complied with ...	4

